



SITUATION REPORT #126



INCIDENT NAME: Walla Walla County COVID-19 UNIFIED COMMAND

DATE: November 19, 2020	TIME: 14:00 Information is updated at 2pm daily	MISSION #20-0265
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AFFECTED AREA: Walla Walla, Washington

CURRENT SITUATION: COVID-19 Surveillance, Monitoring & Case Investigation/Contact Tracing

2019 Novel Coronavirus Outbreak (COVID-19) Walla Walla County Residents - Regional Healthcare by Providence St. Mary Medical Center	Number
Confirmed Cases	1922
Recovered	1418
Deaths	18
2019 Novel Coronavirus Outbreak (COVID-19) Out-of-County Residents – Regional Healthcare by Providence St. Mary Medical Center	
Confirmed Cases	2
Tests Submitted –	Number
Total Negative Results (Walla Walla County)	29215
Confirmed Cases by Community of Residence	Number
Burbank/Wallula	116
College Place	274
Dixie	7
Prescott	43
Touchet/Lowden	34
Waitsburg	16
Walla Walla	1432
TOTAL	1922



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Confirmed Cases by Age	Number
Under 20	262
20-39	752
40-59	564
60-79	240
Over 80	104
Confirmed Cases by Gender	Number
Female	915
Male	1007
TOTAL	1922

REGION 8 PHEPR:

Region 8 PHEPR staff is supporting WWCDCH from their EOC. Next call scheduled for 11/25 3:00-4:00

COMMUNITY MITIGATION MEASURES:

DCH in contact with positive cases, all close contacts on home isolation under daily symptom watch.

- DCH working with businesses and Long-term Care facilities on containment of outbreaks which includes testing, contact tracing and educational information
- DCH and Providence agreement signed to provide isolation and quarantine facilities
- DCH has 800 doses of annual Flu Vaccine for all residents
- DCH attending Covid Vaccine planning meetings with DOH and Providence
- DCH 'Health Space' and CREST training completed for health data management
- DCH and BMAC continue to coordinate community mask distributions
- DCH increased staff capacity for case monitoring and contact tracing to be in compliance with variance applications
- DCH continues work surrounding behavioral health (mental health, substance use) and the coronavirus
- Providence Urgent Care Drive-thru testing operational for those with between 7am-6pm daily
- Walla Walla County Unified Command holding Key Stakeholder calls at 9 am Monday and Thursday
- DCH CD call flu, respiratory illness, COVID-19; next call will be Tuesday, November 24th
- DCH attending M-W-F DOH-Epi to Epi call for LHJ's
- DCH WIC Nutrition benefits continuing to ensure food security for families; completed by telephone consulting and online benefit issuance

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT:

- The Walla Walla County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) has downgraded to Level 2, Limited Operations, effective 05/28/2020 as of 0800.



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- As of 03/24/2020 Walla Walla County Emergency Management continues to work remotely in order to limit exposure that might affect 911 and dispatch personnel who share the facility.
- The Walla Walla County Commissioners signed a Declaration of Emergency, effective 3/13/20 at 2 PM.
- The City of Walla Walla signed a Declaration of Emergency, effective 3/17/20, extended on 4/8/20.
- The City of College Place signed a Declaration of Emergency, effective 3/17/20, extended 6/9/20.
- The City of Waitsburg signed a Declaration of Emergency, effective 3/18/20.
- The Port of Walla Walla signed a Declaration of Emergency, effective 3/19/20, extended 5/28/20.
- The City of Prescott signed a Declaration of Emergency Effective 3/19/20.
- Walla Walla County remains in modified operations/access during regular business to certain county departments.
- Remains in a Unified Command with Walla Walla County Department of Community Health. Unified Command was established 3/13/20 at 2 PM.
- Washington State Emergency Management is now requesting that all Tier 1 priorities be consolidated into a single order. Long Term Care facilities are now considered to be part of the Tier 1 priority, with further changes expected. Tier 2-4 priorities will be consolidated in a 2nd request. Next request period will be for the week beginning 11/23/2020
- PPE tier allocation is changed beginning June 5, 2020, to allow Tier 1 requestors to build on hand supplies to levels sufficient for 14-21 days.

1. Outstanding Resource Requests

WA State Tracking Number	Request Date	Agency	Current Status
WA-202011616300	11/16/20	Food Banks Staffing Request	Assigned
WA-202011911572	11/09/20	Tier 1 Consolidated PPE request	Delivered
WA-202011616326	11/16/20	Tier 1 Consolidated PPE request	Accepted

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2. Effective Strategies and Successes

- Walla Walla County Department of Community Health (DCH) meetings with LTC/ALF/SNF community to stay connected and updated with open dialogue on COVID-19 status in WW Valley.
- Local Health Officer, Prosecuting Attorney and Local Emergency Response Coordinator completing Voluntary and Involuntary Isolation Orders specific to COVID-19.
- Maintain contact with media to keep the public informed.



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- Unified Command calls providing regular communication and collaboration.
- Frequent messaging on Facebook, including Spanish-language posts.
- Providence St Mary Medical Center (PSMMC) Population Health team monitoring PUIs and cases, their awareness of community happenings.
- Blue Mountain Action Council (BMAC) food bank distribution in collaboration with Washington National Guard (WNG).
- Southgate Campus Acute Care wing setup.
- Addressing homeless needs for isolation and quarantine during pandemic.
- DCH Environmental Health team consults for prevention planning for essential businesses.
- Controlled access to WalMart, Home Depot, Albertson's and Safeway.
- Procurement of PPE from Washington State Department of Corrections.
- Continued partnership with WNG.
- DCH virtual meetings with LTC/ALF/SNF community to stay connected and updated with open dialogue on COVID-19 status in WW Valley.
- Proactive work on PSA's and infographics with digital marketing company.
- Solid protocol established between Coroner's Office and PSMMC.
- Tyson compliance with DCH/L&I Essential Business Guidelines and testing of employees.
- Delivery of PPE supplies and test kits from UAC SEOC has enabled us to provide much needed protection to our whole community.
- Experience with annual flu immunization clinics and long history of working together gave us the ability to quickly put together a team for testing at the Tyson Plan. 1,290 Tyson employees tested with staff from PSMMC & DCH.
- Aggressive testing at long-term care facilities.
- Spanish-language PSA's on local Spanish-language radio stations.
- Approval of additional DCH positions and increased hours by the Board of County Commissioners.
- Media specific email and phone number established, the centralized PIO email/phone number is working well and is helping with coordination of interviews.
- Protocols developed by PSMMC to do surgeries for most compelling cases that were delayed.
- Volunteer staffing at DCH.
- DCH/PSMMC/Coroner/Consulate's Office worked together to support a local family with international funeral arrangements.
- PSMMC has done a great job of allocating resources, workers, and supplies for the patients under investigation awaiting results.
- DCH conversations with school districts on distance learning strategies and graduation planning.
- PSMMC tabletop exercise for activation of PSMMC's auxiliary hospital; well attended by community partners.
- Formation of business/economy reopening workgroup. Workgroup team meetings including townhall Q&A with local businesses; webinars to help educate businesses. Continued frequent meetings of the workgroup. Use of Chamber of Commerce website for posting documentation/guidance.
- Tour of PSMMC Alternate Care site, DCH isolation and quarantine sites, and Park Manor by DOH Med Surge Branch.



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- DCYF, Whitman, and DCH debrief on activation of isolation and quarantine for Master's Ranch – West juveniles; successful collaboration.
- Approval of WWEM part-time temp position for logistics by the Board of County Commissioners.
- 1 nurse and 1 disease investigator on staff over the weekend as cases come in over the weekend.
- All of our cases to date are from a known exposure; we're not seeing community spread.
- Arrival of first delivery of masks for low-income population in time for Governor's face mask mandate (36,000 masks). Rapid distribution by Blue Mountain Action Council (BMAC) to nearly 30 agencies and on 6/30/20 at 4 locations in the community.
- With the assistance of DCH, PSMMC received Remdesivir.
- Reopening workgroup recommendation – though no longer required for businesses, a contact log is a good practice.
- Having COVID safety plans in place at businesses benefits successful response to positive employees, as seen recently at a local restaurant.
- City of College Place Hand sanitizer and mask drive-through distribution on 7/7/20 (300 vehicles) 7/9/20 (400 vehicles), and 8/25/20. Handout at their booth at Thursday Farmers Market.
- Meeting on 7/8/20 with DCH/WWEM/USFS/DNR to discuss preplanning for COVID testing, isolation and quarantine.
- Al fresco dining in Downtown Walla Walla and College Place are working well.
- CEPHEID rapid testing machine is now being fully utilized by PSMMC at full capacity.
- Planning for isolation and quarantine of wildland firefighters with use of space at Walla Walla Community College.
- DCH work with large Oregon employer to coordinate cases with Umatilla County; providing education and resources (Health Fair) for employees.
- Hand washing stations at several locations in Downtown Walla Walla.
- [Washington National Guard Title 32 extension through Christmas](#). WNG remain critical to local food bank operations.
- DCH received 36K cloth masks from GCACH (also received 24K KN95s) in August; giving them out at health fairs.
- Highest number of COVID patients at PSMMC since the beginning of the pandemic on 8/11/20, and yet the hospital wasn't overwhelmed.
- Health Fairs: Smith Frozen Foods (August 6), First Fruits (August 12), Tyson Fresh Meats (August 20), Valle Lindo Homes (August 27), Walla Walla River Packing (August 28), & Kiska Farms (September 1), education, masks, hand sanitizer and CDC fliers (Spanish and English) distributed with team from PSMMC & DCH.
- DCH agreement with Whitman College to use North Hall for isolation and quarantine extended until 10/31.
- DCH/Providence/FMC/WWC have aligned their response for population asking for medical note to not wear a mask (exception to required mask wearing); consistent info/guidance that they are not providing notes to patients.
- Community Roundtable discussions for school reopening planning (Cities of Walla Walla, College Place & Waitsburg); looking at effects on workplace, childcare, behavioral health held during the week of August 17 were well attended



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- Department of Commerce Shelter Grant approved for the Sleep Center and purchase of a mobile unit to provide support around the county (2 or 3-year grant).
- 'Testing for Heroes' at PSMMC; employee and first responder antibody testing, initial figures show 60% participation by PSMMC employees.
- City of College Place door-to-door distribution of masks and disinfectant to businesses with the assistance of Chamber of Commerce.
- Slow trend downward in cases.
- Utilization of WNG for filling WEBEOC request for LTC weekly testing to comply with CMS guidelines.
- Work with Providence on future isolation & quarantine options.
- Whitman College success with students following mask wearing guidelines.
- [Veteran's Stand Down](#) on September 26th at VA Hospital.
- Whitman College extending agreement for use of North Hall for isolation and quarantine to the end of November.
- LTC reporting that WNG has provided 'amazing support' for COVID testing to meet CMS requirements.
- DCH has seen positive feedback on Facebook to posting of Halloween guidance.
- Today's report of 3% positivity rate; first time below 5% since July.
- Protocols for following positive antigen tests with PCR testing to confirm at LTC facilities.
- Drive thru flu vaccination clinic at Walla Walla High School on 10/14 for 5 – 18-year old students.
- Walla Walla County sales tax revenue for 2020 is unexpectedly greater than the same time last year. Good news for the budget.
- PSMMC/DCH drive through flu clinic on October 24. All doses were given out. (500 foundation, 35 DCH). Good turnout. Very favorable feedback from observers. Opportunity to examine logistics if location were used for COVID vaccination.
- DCH and PSMMC went to First Fruits on October 28th to administer 60 doses of flu vaccine. Because of the weather, some employees were out in the fields working and unavailable for vaccination. Despite this it was a good turn out and many reported receiving the flu shot for the first time this year.
- DCH webpage is now fully online and available to public, www.covidwwc.com/. The website offers dual-language accessibility with pages dedicated to Spanish language content.
- DCH Facebook in Spanish language is now fully operational: www.facebook.com/WWCDCHespanol
- DCH, LTC facilities, clinics and the hospital are maintaining great lines of communication in order to help manage patient care and avoid overwhelming the hospital.
- DCH was able to obtain BinaxNow test kits.
- Distribution of county funds/grants to local businesses.
- Family Medical Center Flu Clinic, November 2nd to November 5th, gave out 173 flu shots.
- SEOC did a great job filling WWEM's emergent PAPR order; very quick turnaround.
- LTC facilities have been able to take patients back to decompress impact of COVID on PSMMC (hospital).
- Increased hours at PSMMC testing site have improved traffic flow.
- DCH/LTC/PSMMC call on patient transfer protocols has helped keep the numbers down for patients going to the hospital.
- WNG mission extended through March 15, 2021 for foodbank distribution assistance.

3. Risks and challenges



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- COVID-19 Cases
 - Total Confirmed Cases: 1922
 - ❖ Active: 486
 - Home Isolation: 476
 - Hospitalized: 12 (Walla Walla County residents – 10, Out of County residents – 2)
 - ❖ Deaths: 18
 - Washington State Penitentiary (included in numbers above): 212 incarcerated (55 active) and 18 staff (3 active)
 - Positivity rate for last week 11/7 – 11/13 15%
 - 10/24 – 11/06 20% unknown exposure
 - 10/31 – 11/13 39% unknown exposure
 - Business-related cases are growing; impacting healthcare systems
 - Family clusters (all age ranges)
 - Lag-time in test results; processing, reporting leading to delay in case investigation
- Concern for rapid spread at congregated facilities; multiple outbreaks at LTC facilities.
- Cross-jurisdictional coordination with Umatilla County, OR, Benton/Franklin County, WA.
- Need to continue to monitor for behavioral health issues.
- Case investigation slowed by contacts not answering phone calls from DCH.
- Getting vaccination drive-through's set up for winter.
- Cold/flu season; respiratory symptoms may be confused with COVID and require workers to stay home.
- Highly complicated processes for storage and administration of COVID vaccine.
- 'COVID fatigue' is very high with additional challenges presented by winter; more time inside, less daylight and sunshine, etc. Need to focus on community resilience.
- Idaho hospitals at, or near, capacity. We can expect transfer of patients to Walla Walla County.
- People moving indoors due to cold; more close contacts.
- Face coverings not being worn in private despite the fact that 95% report wearing masks when in public.
- Increased pressure on systems due to spike in case numbers. Increasing risk across communities.
- Mental health challenges as schools return to remote-only learning models.
- Seeing a growing trend towards family spread.
- Delay in delivery of requested PPE as the State moves to contracted shipment delivery.
- Highly contagious nature of the virus is causing severe challenges for Long Term Care facilities.
- People are still reporting to work with mild symptoms, or with symptomatic family members.
- PSMMC having challenges with the Urgent Care drive through as testing volumes are spiraling and the lines are long, sometimes with traffic congestion.
- PPE orders from State have had longer turnaround since they moved to contracted shipment delivery.
- Several LTC facilities with positive cases; either staff or staff and residents due to congregate settings. They are working with DCH.
- YMCA shut down their childcare facility due to a COVID case.
- Increase in Lab Corp turnaround time for COVID testing.
- Testing notifications taking longer at some facilities. Individuals tested by PSMMC who have MyChart application can get their results on the app. PSMMC will follow up on making sure it is recommended to



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people undergoing testing to sign up for the app if they don't already have it. Rite-Aid has an interface that connects to the State, but there is a delay in reporting the result to the test subject.

- Seeing lots of positive COVID cases in asymptomatic individuals; additional questions needed for the screening process.
- Non-profit in Tri-Cities identified that is ordering PPE, duplicating the efforts of WWEM, with plans to receive PPE and rent transportation to Walla Walla. WWEM is working with them to resolve.
- Gatherings continue in spite of recommendations by DCH not to gather.
- Walla Walla Clinic reports an increase in patients incorrectly answering screening questions (recent COVID testing, exposure).
- Families are asking to take their family member out of LTC facilities for holiday gatherings.
- Concern that Governor's Office could have done a better job coordinating release of information about new restrictions.
- Rite-Aid not informing people that they need to stay quarantined after having been COVID-19 test? Anecdotal evidence that this is happening. DCH will contact Rite-Aid.
- PSMCM reporting that testing turnaround time for Lab Corp has increased to 50 hrs. (timed by when it arrives at Lab Corp). Three labs in use - San Diego, Phoenix and Seattle.
- COVID-19 cases at VAMC Residential Rehab Unit; not accepting new patients at this time.
- WWEM reporting delays in PPE deliveries due to change by the state to commercial drivers. Also, requests received that do not matching shipment information on WebEOC.
- Chamber of Commerce receiving lots of phone calls from businesses about financial assistance; Governor's Office is still working on distribution plan for \$50 million in assistance for businesses. **Abundant concerns at all levels about timely distribution of funds.**
- Logistical concerns about administration of 2 doses of vaccine; must use same product/company for both immunizations.
- Advance messaging from Governor's Office about new restrictions could have mitigated hoarding of high demand products (toilet paper).

4. Future operational plans (24, 48, and 72 hours out)

- Emergency Management is activated at **Level 2 – Limited Operations** (virtual, with no face-to-face contact).
- WWEM acting as liaison to Washington National Guard (WNG).
- WWEM continued collection of donations.
- Coordination and communication with Unified Area Command State Emergency Operations Center (UAC SEOC). Unified Command SEOC conference call on Thursdays.
- Monitor WebEOC Resource Tracker for delivery of supplies from Washington State to Walla Walla County.
- WWEM submission of new resource requests on WebEOC.
- WWEM distribution of resources.
- DCH weekend staffing.
- Weekly ESF6 Human Services weekly conference calls.
- PSMCM maintaining daily sit reports.
- EMS providers tracking PPE use with CDC PPE Burn Rate Calculator.
- Continue work with the media.
- DCH case investigation/contact tracing of positive cases.



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- Reopening Business Workgroup & Business/Economy meeting every Thursday.
- DCH and PSMMC are continuing to work with Washington State Department of Corrections for cases at Washington State Penitentiary. WNG is providing testing support. **Currently seeing a spike in cases in the prison population.**
- Washington National Guard deployed to assist with testing at LTC facility to meet CMS requirements.
- LTC facilities to continue to test based on CMS requirements to test if positivity rate is over 5%.
- DCH working with LTC facilities to provide test kits and swabbing for facility wide testing.
- DCH and PSMMC Population Health continue to administer flu vaccine.
- DCH opting into the State's contact tracing to help mitigate stress on DCH staff caused by increase in cases.
- PSMMC Urgent Care drive through testing operating with extended hours, 7AM – 6 PM.
- DCH working on community concerns around cohorting positive patients/staff to meet critical/crisis staffing shortages.
- Whitman College is moving forward with plans for spring semester opening; testing students upon arrival and then one week of isolation (PRC-based testing and rapid tests).
- DCH messaging emphasizing the importance of social distancing, masking, limiting gatherings.
- EMS seeing an increase in calls for service.
- PSMMC looking for a different location to test presurgical patients.
- All testing sites will be closed on Thanksgiving.
- DCH ordered a 25-ft. ultracold freezer for potential storage of Pfizer COVID vaccine.
- LTC facility with outbreaks reporting wide range of reactions to the virus; age doesn't seem to be as much a factor as comorbidities.
- Walla Walla Chamber is working with the Association of Businesses for remedies to business restrictions imposed by the Governor's Office.
- Tomorrow's REDi Coalition Vaccine Distribution meeting will discuss phase 1a vaccine recipients, along with logistics discussions as multiple vaccines become distributed.
- Walla Walla County public schools update:
 - WWPS will remain in full remote learning until January based on community activity
 - Prescott Schools has moved to full remote learning effective today due to a staff case that has caused them to not be able to deliver services.
 - All WW County schools are struggling with cases, but mainly quarantines that are straining sub pools needed to keep schools operating onsite (for those that are in-person)

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COMMUNICATIONS:

- Social Media/PIO/Media Requests: eocpio@co.walla-walla.wa.us

ANTICIPATED NEEDS: Contact tracing and disease investigation

WHERE TO FIND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Walla Walla County Department of Community Health – Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Response
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Phone Assistance:

- Washington State Department of Health: [800-525-0127](tel:800-525-0127), press #
- Walla Walla County Community Health Information line: [509-524-2647](tel:509-524-2647)

Web Site Information:

- HOLIDAYS: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/holidays.html>
- DCH <https://www.covidwwc.com/walla-walla-county>
- OHA Emerging Respiratory Disease page: www.healthoregon.org/coronavirus
- Washington Department of Health: <https://www.doh.wa.gov/Emergencies/Coronavirus>
- CDC COVID-19 page: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>
- CDC travel notice: <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices>
- WHO page: <https://www.who.int/westernpacific/emergencies/novel-coronavirus>

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DISTRIBUTED TO: Walla Walla County BOCC & Clerk of the Board; Providence St. Mary Medical Center Staff, Region 8 PHEPR-RERC, Benton-Franklin Health District, Umatilla Co. LHJ Director, Walla Walla County EMD and EMS & MPD, WA DOH Duty Officer, WA DOH LOFR; Klickitat LERC; Yakima LERC; Benton-Franklin LERC; Columbia Co. Director; REDi HCC, Columbia Co. LHJ, City of Walla Walla, City of College Place, City of Waitsburg, McMorris-Rogers Rep. Port of Walla Walla, and Health Office